

EXTERNAL

AI Index: EUR 46/27/97

19 September 1997

Further information on EXTRA 122/97 (EUR 46/26/97, 9 September 1997) - Death penalty / imminent execution and new concern: Fear of further executions

**CHECHEN REPUBLIC - RUSSIAN FEDERATION Rasul Doshukayev, aged 22
Said Khasiyev, aged 29**

Rasul Doshukayev and Said Khasiyev were publicly executed by firing squad on 18 September 1997 in Grozny. According to reports, three of the victims relatives were among the six executioners. Although filming of these executions had been officially banned, it was reported that journalists present at the executions were allowed to do so.

Rasul Doshukayev and Said Khasiyev had been found guilty by the Islamic Supreme Shari'a Court of the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya of the murder of three people, including an eight-year-old boy, during a robbery.

First Deputy Prime Minister Movladi Udugov was reported as saying after the executions that no more public executions would take place in the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya. However, a spokesman for the Chechen president allegedly responded to international calls for the two men to be granted clemency by saying " *The disapproval by Russia and the West of our actions - shooting by a firing squad and public executions - means that we are heading in the right direction... there is no doubt that only the laws of Allah and Shari'a will be in force in Chechnya.*"

Amnesty International fears that other people in the Chechen republic- Ichkeriya may also face imminent execution, among them 30 people who are currently awaiting the Shari'a courts' verdicts on charges of kidnapping, after President Maskhadov issued a decree in June 1997 allowing courts to sentence kidnappers to death.

On 3 September 1997, a man and a woman were publicly executed by firing squad after being sentenced to death for murder by the Chechen Supreme Shari'a Court. A third defendant, also sentenced to death, was not executed after it was established that she was pregnant. Amnesty International fears that she may be executed once she has given birth to her child.

A new criminal code developed in the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya recently introduces the rules and regulations of the Islamic religious tradition, the Shari'a law, into the judicial practice of the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya. This was the third public execution conducted in the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya by an Islamic Shari'a court.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In August 1996 a peace agreement ended the hostilities in the armed conflict in the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya, which began in 1991 when the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya claimed its independence. Under this peace agreement the region's final political status has been deferred for five years, but the Chechen leadership has insisted upon Chechnya's independence from the Russian legal and governmental institutions, including the laws of the Russian Federation.

However, regardless of its current legal status, the Chechen republic-Ichkeriya still remains bound by the international human rights obligations of the Russian Federation, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

and the Convention against Torture. Amnesty International does not promote or oppose any particular system of justice, urging only that it conforms to internationally accepted standards.

Amnesty International is opposed to the death penalty in all cases and without reservation on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/ airmail letters in Russian, English or in your own language:

- expressing outrage at the public executions of Rasul Doshukayev and Said Khasiyev;
- expressing sympathy for the victims of violent crime and their families, but referring to the 1988 Study for the United Nations on the death penalty which concluded that the death penalty is not an effective deterrent for violent crime;
- urging the Chechen authorities to amend all articles in the criminal code which provide for the death penalty, and replace them with punishments which do not violate international human rights standards;
- urging the authorities to abolish the death penalty and grant clemency to all death row prisoners.

APPEALS TO:

The President of the Chechen Republic, Aslan Maskhadov
Russian Federation
Chechenskaya Respublika Ichkeriya
Grozny
Administratsiya Prezidenta
Prezidentu Maskhadovu

Telegrams: Presidentu, Grozny, Chechenskaya Respublika Ichkeriya, Rossikaya Federatsiya

Salutation: Dear President

The Representative of the Chechen Republic in Moscow, Vakha Khasanov
Russian Federation
Moskva 121002
Denezhny pereulok d.12
Predstavitelstvo Chechenskoy respubliki Ichkeriya
Chrezvychainomu i Polnomochnemu Predstavitelyu Chechenskoy respubliki
Ichkeriya v Rossiskoy Federatsii
Khasanovu V.

Telegrams: Predstavitelu Chechenskoy Respubliki Ichkeriya Khasanovu, Moskva, Rossiskaya Federatsiya

Faxes: +7 095 241 73 80 (you will need to say "Fax" once the phone is answered).

Salutation: Dear Vakha Khasanov

NO COPIES

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 October 1997.